

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint for a motor vehicle, the ball and socket joint comprising:

a ball pivot with a pin and a joint ball;

a housing having a recess, said ball pivot being arranged with said joint ball rotatably and pivotably in said recess provided in said housing and extending out of said housing through a pin opening; [[and]]

a moisture sensor in operative connection with said recess, said moisture sensor detecting an amount of moisture located in said recess of said housing;

a moisture sensor cover arranged on said housing, said moisture sensor being located within an interior of said moisture sensor cover; and

a sealing bellows engaging said housing and said pin of said ball pivot.

2. (Previously Presented) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 1, wherein said moisture sensor is fastened in or at the housing.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) A ball and socket joint in accordance with, claim 1, wherein said moisture sensor is arranged in an area of the housing facing away from said pin opening.

5. (Previously Presented) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 1, further comprising: a protective wall provided with passage openings and arranged between said moisture sensor and said recess.

6. (Previously Presented) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 5, wherein said passage openings extend around a central wall area.

7 - 16. (Canceled)

17. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint for a motor vehicle, the ball and socket joint comprising:

a ball pivot with a pin and a joint ball;

a housing defining a recess and a pin opening, said joint ball being seated in said recess
5 of said housing for rotatable and pivotable movement in said recess, said pin extending out of said recess of said housing through [[a]] said pin opening; [[and]]

a moisture sensor connected to said housing, said moisture sensor detecting for sensing a degree of moisture in said recess;

a sealing bellows in contact with said housing and said pin; and

10 a moisture sensor cover engaging said housing, said moisture sensor cover having an inner moisture sensor cover surface, said inner moisture sensor cover surface and a portion of said housing defining an interior space, said moisture sensor being located within said interior

space, said moisture sensor cover having an outer surface, said outer surface being in contact with an outside environment.

18. (Previously Presented) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 17, wherein said moisture sensor is fastened indirectly or directly to said housing and said moisture sensor is arranged in operative connection with an area of the housing facing away from said pin opening.

19. (Currently Amended) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 17, further comprising: a protective wall provided with passage openings and arranged between said moisture sensor and said recess, said protective wall engaging said housing, said protective wall defining a portion of said interior space.

20. (Previously Presented) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 19, wherein said passage openings extend around a central wall area.

21. (New) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 1, wherein said moisture sensor is a humidity sensor.

22. (New) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 21, wherein said moisture sensor has two electrodes and a hygroscopic layer located between said two electrodes.

23. (New) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 6, wherein said moisture sensor is located at or above said central wall area of said protective wall.

24. (New) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 23, wherein said passage openings extend from said central wall area to a wall of said protective wall, wherein a web connects said central wall area with said wall of said protective wall, said web extending between two adjacent passage openings.

25. (New) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 6, wherein said recess is filled with a lubricant, said moisture sensor being located opposite said central wall area such that said lubricant does not contact said moisture sensor.

26. (New) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 25, wherein said moisture sensor is a humidity sensor.

27. (New) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 1, wherein said moisture sensor cover and a portion of said housing define a space, said moisture sensor being arranged in said space.

28. (New) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 27, wherein said moisture sensor is fastened in or at said housing.

29. (New) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 1, wherein said moisture sensor measures humidity of air surrounding said moisture sensor.

30. (New) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 29, wherein said moisture sensor cover and a portion of said housing define a space, said moisture sensor being arranged in said space.

31. (New) A ball and socket joint in accordance with claim 17, further comprising: a protective wall with a central wall area and a plurality of webs, said webs, said central wall area and said protective wall defining a plurality of passage openings, said protective wall being connected to said central wall area via said webs, each web being located between one passage opening and an adjacent passage opening, said housing having a projection extending from an inner surface thereof, said protective wall engaging said projection of said housing, said protective wall defining a portion of said interior space, said moisture sensor being located opposite said central wall area.

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